



# **Code of Practice for the Horse Industry**

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# CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE HORSE INDUSTRY

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

The Australian horse industry is large and diverse. It includes professional and amateur sporting organisations, breed associations, commercial recreational activity operators and education providers. Additionally there are vast numbers of individuals and businesses who use or breed horses for pleasure or professional purposes. The economic impact of these groups and their suppliers is estimated to be \$6.3 billion per annum. (*“The Horse Industry – Contributing to the Australian Economy. A report for the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation, June 2001”*)

As well as having a large economic impact, horse related activities make a significant contribution to life style and personal contentment. They are pursued at the Olympic level as well as being enjoyed by casual weekend participants. In addition to their ongoing contribution to economic and social wellbeing, horses and horse activities are also a major part of Australia's heritage.

Despite the size of the horse industry there is not an agreed minimum standard for managing risks related to horse activities. This has been highlighted by changes in insurance markets throughout 2002 and 2003. The lack of a minimum standard for managing risks makes it easier for less satisfactory businesses and organisations to operate within the industry. In turn it is difficult for insurers and members of the public to distinguish between good and bad organisations. While most well established organisations have excellent and effective rules and regulations, for the safe conduct of the events that they organise, even these groups may benefit from the establishment of minimum risk management standards.

To allow the adoption of a minimum standard of risk management for horse activities the Australian Horse Industry Council (AHIC), with assistance and funding from the Federal Government, has undertaken to develop this industry Code of Practice. It is anticipated that this Code will assist in addressing the issue of public liability insurance. Hopefully it will also enhance the quality of involvement in horse activities experienced by all participants and spectators.

The AHIC will administer this Code.

### 1.2 Structure

This document sets out the components of the Code of Practice for the horse industry. It is based on a generic model that has been developed by the Ministerial Council on Consumer Affairs.

Elements of the code are:

- Scope and objectives
- Core rules (the technical requirements clause)
- Accreditation
- Complaints procedures

- Dispute procedures
- Administration of the code
- Publicity and reporting
- Monitoring, review and improvement

The code is voluntary i.e. it has no legislative basis. Organisations that become accredited to it will benefit by having a set of verified procedures that will help minimise their risks as well as providing a level of assurance to customers or participants. These independently verified procedures will complement, but do not replace, the rules and guidelines under which well established associations conduct their events and activities. Organisations that do not wish to become accredited may also benefit from the Code by using it as a guide to managing horse related activities in a manner consistent with the Code.

In addition to this core document, that defines the rules and procedures for operation of the code, there is a range of supporting documents that can be used by associations and organisations that are involved in horse activities. Such documents include checklists, guidance on how to meet requirements, help with risk assessment and advice on training.

NOTE : These supporting documents are being developed and refined on an ongoing basis by the AHIC.

## **2 SCOPE**

This Code of Practice for the operation of horse related activities sets out requirements that are relevant to the health and safety of spectators, participants and staff and the provision of suitable facilities, including buildings and equipment. It includes a number of provisions relating to the health, hygiene, amenity and safety of the horses but is not a complete horse welfare code.

This Code should not conflict with any statutory requirements. Where there is conflict or overlap, statutory requirements take precedence. Conversely, compliance with this code does not negate the necessity for complying with relevant regulations.

This Code excludes competition rules for particular events and consideration of non-horse related risks.

## **3 OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of this Code of Practice are:

- To assist in the development of a high standard of risk management throughout the horse industry
- To address, and facilitate the control of, the safety of competitors, participants, and spectators
- To encourage compliance with relevant legislation
- To develop a culture of continuous improvement.

This Code sets out minimum requirements but it is expected that all accredited organisations will strive to achieve a level in excess of these requirements.

## 4 ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

### 4.1 Abbreviations

For the purposes of this code the following abbreviations apply.

AHIC Australian Horse Industry Council

CRC Complaints Review Committee of the AHIC

### 4.2 Definitions

For the purposes of this code the following definitions apply.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Accident	An occurrence causing physical harm or damage to persons or property, brought about unintentionally.
Activity	The pursuit and/or undertaking of sporting or leisure interests involving horses (e.g. a trail ride, dressage competition, horse racing, pageant, rodeo).
Arena	An area specifically designed or prepared for competition, tuition, training or performance based activities involving horses.
Driver	A person in control of a horse drawn vehicle.
Event	An organised series of activities held in (usually) the one place at the one time. Events have a defined start and end and may involve both participants and spectators. Payment for entrance may or may not be required.
Hazard	An inanimate object or situation capable of causing an accident (e.g. rocks, slippery surface)
Horse	Includes but is not limited to horse, galloway, hack, pony, mule, jenny, donkey and other equines
Horse hire	Provision of a horse to a customer for a fee.
Incident	An occurrence which has resulted in, or if repeated could lead to, damage or injury to property or persons.
Instructor	A person providing tuition in horse related activities.
Manager	The person in charge of running horse related activities, events and/or the facilities in which these activities are conducted. Includes, for example, event managers, managers of commercial trail riding establishments, or organisers of special performances.
Organisation	A business, not for profit club or association or other entity that conducts an event or activity.
Participants	Individuals who are participating in an activity and are riding, driving, or leading a horse. They include competitors, paid performers, pupils and customers.
Premises	The buildings and grounds (including associated facilities) used by participants and spectators for, during or in the course of activities or events.
Rider	A person on a horse and who is responsible for controlling the horse.
Spectators	People watching, but not participating in, activities. Includes families, friends and members of the general public.
Staff	A generic term applied to persons working under the direction of (or with) a manager. It includes individuals who are volunteers or who are employed full time or part time. The term also includes officials who may be responsible for different aspects of an event or activity.

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Trail ride	An organised recreational ride that operates outside of enclosed areas.
Tuition	Providing organised learning, on a paid or unpaid basis, to a pupil. Includes but is not limited to: commercial coaching, riding schools, club instruction, clinics.

## **5 TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS**

### **5.1 General**

These technical requirements are aimed at minimising risks to persons or property that may be injured or damaged as a consequence of horse activities.

The main horse related risks include:

- A fall from a horse due to actions or poor control by the rider.
- An uncontrolled action by a horse (e.g. kicking, biting, striking or pulling back)
- A fall by horse and rider due to adverse conditions (e.g. poor arena preparation, slippery surface).
- A fall from a horse due to an unpredictable incident (e.g. loose dog scaring the horse).
- A fall from a horse or other accident due to inadequate gear (e.g. tack failing, footwear failing to release the rider).
- Interaction between a horse and/or rider with a third party (e.g. a road accident).
- A driver falling from a horse drawn vehicle.

And the main consequences are:

- Injuries including soft tissue injuries and fractures to limbs and body.
- Injury to the rider or driver's head from a fall.
- Injury due to a horse falling on the rider or other person.
- Injury to spectators (or a third party) from uncontrollable or unpredictable actions by a horse (e.g. a kick, car accident).
- Death from falls, kicks and crushing.
- Damage to property (e.g. damage to a vehicle from a horse kicking the vehicle).

The likelihood of these incidents occurring is dependent on the nature of the activity involving horses. While this code addresses the majority of common risks, managers should be aware of the unpredictable nature of horses, and risk planning should take this unpredictability into account.

The requirements of this code relate to the use of horses and the need to control or prevent unintended interactions between horses, people and property. In addition to the horse caused risks, there are a number of other associated risks where horses are present. These include (but are not limited to):

- Injury due to physical conditions (e.g. slips, trips, falls)
- Environmental injuries (e.g. sunstroke, insect bites)
- Property damage (e.g. a car crash)

## 5.2 Interpretation

When reading this code, individuals should be aware of the structure and format of the requirements, and the implications for their interpretation and application.

The following terms have specific meanings:

- Must* A mandatory requirement of this code. An individual or organisation has to comply with the requirement to claim compliance (and hence gain accreditation).
- Should* Recommended but not mandatory. Individuals or organisations do not have to comply with these suggestions, but to do so would represent good practice.
- NOTE:* Explanation of the requirement, or examples of how the requirement can be met. Does not contain requirements.

The Technical Requirements are organised into two parts:

- General requirements* Requirements that must be met by all accredited organisations or managers.
- Additional requirements* Requirements, additional to the general requirements, which apply to organisations or instructors offering the specified activities in the specified sectors.

It is not intended that non-compliance with these requirements should necessarily be interpreted as a failure of duty of care. Further it is recognised that organisations and individuals may satisfy their duty of care in ways that may not be consistent with this code.

## 5.3 Exemptions

An organisation may apply to the AHIC to seek exemption from one or more requirements of this code. Exemptions will only be granted if it can be demonstrated that the proposed variation will not significantly lessen the safety provisions of this code. Applications for exemptions must include a risk assessment (safety) of the proposed changes. Where an exemption is granted, the organisation must demonstrate that they have warned and/or notified participants of any increased risks.

*NOTE:* Even though exemptions may be granted to provisions of this code, individual insurance companies may seek more stringent requirements and may not recognise the exemptions.

## 5.4 Waivers and risk acknowledgement

Signed declarations and contractual arrangements (e.g. waivers, indemnity forms, disclaimers etc.), between a participant and an organisation, can be used to limit the legal liability of the organisation in the case of loss or injury experienced by the participant. Legislation supporting these declarations and contracts varies between the States and Territories of Australia. The AHIC advises organisations wishing to use waivers etc. to seek expert advice in the State or Territory in which they operate.

Regardless of specific legislation, signed declarations etc. can assist in management of risks. Firstly if participants are properly informed of the risks of an activity they may modify their behaviour accordingly. Also by being required to acknowledge the risks of a particular activity or event, the participant cannot claim to have been unaware of these risks. Finally, by including in the declaration the participant's self assessment of their capability, claims

resulting from mismatch between horse and rider may have a defence (e.g. the participant signed that he was an experienced rider, so he received a horse that was suitable to that level).

Waivers are not compulsory under this code however it is a requirement of this code that managers be satisfied that all participants are aware of the inherent risks of horse activities prior to participation commencing.

Horse activities involve a number of inherent risks. By their nature inherent risks cannot be eliminated by the exercise of reasonable care and skill, without altering integral aspects of the activity. For example the only way to totally eliminate the risk of a rider falling from a horse would be to stop the rider getting on the horse. Inherent risks often manifest because of the unpredictability of a horse's reaction to such things as sounds, sudden movements, unfamiliar objects and interaction with other horses. They also manifest because of an inability of riders to follow the movements of a horse while riding, which can lead to a rider falling from the horse.

The degree of inherent risk will vary with the nature of the activity. For example the inherent risks of horse racing are much greater than the inherent risks of dressage riding. While it is not possible to totally eliminate inherent risks, all reasonable steps should be taken to minimise them without unduly compromising the activity.

If services are not rendered with due care and skill, risks, that are not inherent to the activity arise. By way of example, rendering services without due care and skill can include but is not limited to:

- providing equipment that is faulty
- not taking reasonable steps to ensure that premises are suitable for the purpose for which they are intended
- hiring dangerous horses
- failing to make reasonable and prudent efforts to ensure that horses hired to participants are suitable for the participants ability
- committing an act or omission that constitutes wilful or wanton disregard for the safety of the participant or spectator (which causes injury) or
- intentionally injuring the participant.

It is the opinion of the AHIC that participants in horse activities should be made aware of and accept responsibility for the inherent risks of horse activities. However, the AHIC does not support contractual arrangements, between organisations and participants, that lead to organisations not being liable for injury to a participant as a result of the organisation rendering services without due care and skill.

Despite not supporting the use of the aforementioned contractual arrangements, the AHIC accepts that it may be an economic necessity for many businesses and organisations, accredited to this code, to enter into these arrangements. Further, when they do, it is in the interests of all concerned that they do so while complying with the requirements of this code.

## 5.5 Legislation

This code should not conflict with any statutory requirements. Where there is conflict or overlap, statutory requirements take precedence. Conversely, compliance with this code does not negate the necessity for complying with relevant legislation.

This code does not specifically address requirements under state and local government legislation, although it is a general requirement of this code that all relevant legislation be complied with. Since state and local government requirements differ widely from location to location, managers are advised to check carefully with the relevant authorities and not rely on hearsay or previous practice.

A list (not exhaustive) of the legislation that is most applicable to horse related activities and premises includes:

- Trade Practices Act
- Workplace Occupational Health & Safety
- Environmental Protection
- Hazardous chemicals
- Planning Ordinances
- Child protection legislation
- Fire Regulations
- Employment awards
- Health regulations
- Animal welfare
- Building regulations

## 5.6 Implementation

This code applies to a wide range of situations and the necessary actions by managers (and staff) to satisfy their duty of care, and meet the requirements of this code, will also vary widely. Consequently managers should assess individual situations in relation to the requirements in this code and take those steps that are reasonable and practical to minimise the occurrence of accidents.

Requirements for horses and horse and rider equipment are an example of how the necessary actions by managers to satisfy duty of care will vary from one situation to the next. The actions necessary to satisfy duty of care will be different when the horse and/or equipment is supplied by the participant as opposed to being supplied to the participant.

As a guideline, for horse and rider equipment, as a minimum it would be expected that:

1. Where a participant hires a horse it is the responsibility of the hirer to ensure that the relevant requirements of this code are followed with the exception and proviso that:
  - a) the hirer is not responsible for accidents caused by defects of equipment supplied by the participant; and
  - b) the hirer has inspected, or is otherwise satisfied, that any equipment supplied by the participant will meet the requirements of this code.
2. Where a participant supplies their own horse and equipment, managers should:
  - a) Have a set of rules or guidelines in relation to the relevant requirements of this code.
  - b) Have a reasonable expectation that the rules or guidelines will be followed.
  - c) When breaches of the rules or guidelines are apparent take appropriate action to correct them.

To create a reasonable expectation that rules and guidelines will be followed, formal procedures may be necessary. Such procedures should be relevant to the age and experience of the participant and the nature of the activity. The procedures may include inspection of horse and participant equipment by managers, or their staff, to determine compliance with this code. (In the case of young or inexperienced competitors and/or high risk events, the need for some form of inspection, or other means to endeavour to ensure that equipment supplied by the participant meets the requirements of this Code, is increased. Conversely, the need to inspect equipment of competent adult riders, not engaging in higher risk activities, is reduced or absent.)

### **5.6.1 Horse and rider equipment**

#### *5.6.1.1 General*

1. Properly fitted helmets that provide an adequate level of protection against physical trauma to the head must be worn by:
  - a) All riders and
  - b) All participants (including drivers, grooms and passengers) engaged in speed (timed) or other high risk driving activities.

Helmets that comply with AS/NZS 3838, EN 1384, or ASTM F1163 and are less than five years old from the date of manufacture are deemed to provide an adequate level of protection to the wearer in all circumstances. Helmets that have had significant impacts (i.e. where the strength and integrity of the shell is likely to have been compromised) or have been otherwise structurally damaged must not be used.

#### NOTES:

1. There are inherent risks in horse activities. Head injuries caused by a fall are frequent. Consequences of a fall could be death or permanent disability and helmets have been shown to significantly reduce this likelihood.
  2. 'Properly fitted' includes use of the chinstrap.
  3. Compliant helmets will have a 'certification' or 'compliance' mark on the helmet.
  4. Helmets normally have the date of manufacture marked on the helmet. AS/NZS 3838 advises that helmets have a usable life of 5 years, and those that are used very frequently may require earlier replacement (i.e. where the strength of the shell may be compromised).
  5. Organisers may apply for exemptions from this requirement where the 'character' or conduct of a specific activity may be compromised. (e.g. performances, historical pageants, vaulting) – see Clause 7. As part of the exemption the manager would be asked to demonstrate that they have properly notified and warned participants of the increased risks of head injury through not wearing a helmet. It is extremely unlikely that any exemptions would be granted for participants under the age of 18 except where it can be shown that helmets may increase the danger to participants (e.g. in vaulting, certain disabilities).
2. Appropriate footwear must be worn at all times when riding. Where stirrups are used this footwear must enable the uninhibited removal of the foot from the stirrup iron, especially in the event of a fall from a horse. The footwear must also hinder the foot sliding forward and through the stirrup iron, which may result in a rider's foot or leg being caught in the stirrup.

Additions to stirrups that achieve the same purpose are an acceptable alternative.

3. When handling horses (i.e. not riding) footwear must be worn that provides protection to the top of the foot in the event of a horse stepping on the foot.

NOTE : Boots are preferred. Open toed sandals and thongs provide minimal or no protection and should not be worn.

4. For the purpose of minimising discomfort and avoiding breakage or malfunction of equipment that may put riders at risk, all equipment (e.g. saddles, bridles) used with the horse must be matched to the activity being undertaken, in good repair and correctly fitted.

NOTE : 'Matched to the activity' means that stock saddles would not normally be used for jumping, racing saddles for trail rides and so on.

#### *5.6.1.2 Additional requirements for horse hire.*

1. Minimum clothing requirements are full-length trousers and a sleeved shirt (short sleeves acceptable) to offer protection from physical injuries or distress to the rider (e.g. sunburn, rubbing and grazes). Staff are responsible for ensuring that all participants engaged in trail riding have adequate protection from the environment taking into account reasonably foreseeable weather conditions and the distance from shelter.

NOTE : Adequate protection should be assessed in relation to the duration of the ride. For example an overnight ride into high altitude areas will have different requirements to a one-hour ride in the same area.

2. Saddles must be securely attached to the horse in a manner that keeps the saddle properly and securely in place. A saddle must be secured by at least two points of attachment (e.g. double-buckle girth, girth and surcingle) or by a double-wrapped latigo.
3. Items such as bags, cameras and loose jewellery that could become entangled in a manner that may cause an accident, must be carried in a way that will minimise the chance of this happening.

### **5.6.2 Premises**

#### *5.6.2.1 General*

1. Managers responsible for the day-to-day operation of premises must ensure that those premises comply with relevant state and local government safety regulations before allowing activities or events to take place on the premises.
2. When activities or events are conducted at premises managed by a third party, the manager of those activities or events must determine whether the premises comply with relevant state and local government safety regulations before allowing the activities or events to proceed.

If compliance cannot be determined, or it is found that the premises are not compliant, activities or events should only proceed after the manager of the activities has undertaken a documented risk assessment of the relevant areas of the premises and is satisfied that events and activities can be safely managed.

3. Managers must, as far as practicable, ensure areas designated for public use and areas designated for activities are free of obvious hazards and are fit, proper and safe for the purpose for which they are intended. Information that identifies hazards that cannot be removed should be available to participants and spectators. (e.g. signs, barriers or other warnings)
4. In consideration of the nature of the activity and the likelihood and consequences of a horse escaping from the premises, perimeter fencing must be installed and/or other measures must be taken, that will discourage horses from attempting to jump out of or otherwise escape from the premises.

Measures others than fencing may include secure tethering, internal fencing or a set of operational procedures that staff and participants should comply with.

NOTE : The objective of the requirement is to ensure, as far as possible, that a horse does not escape onto a roadway. For example, if the premises are located near busy roadways there is a heightened need for effective perimeter fencing. Conversely, events held in remote locations may not require the use of perimeter fencing. Factors to consider in determining the nature of the fencing is the type of activity being undertaken on the premises (e.g. a pony show compared to horseracing), the likely actions of an uncontrolled horse and operational procedures employed to prevent horses escaping.

5. In consideration of the nature of the activity, and the likelihood and consequences of:

- a) a horse escaping from the arena and causing an accident or
- b) spectators including children gaining access to the arena and being injured

arenas must be fenced and/or surrounded by a physical space that minimises the possibility of uncontrolled interactions between horses and spectators. Arena fencing must also be designed to minimise the chance of a rider or horse injuring themselves.

6. To minimise the occurrence of uncontrolled interaction between horses, vehicles and people there must be designated areas for different activities (e.g. float-parking, mounting yards, spectating etc).

NOTE : There are a number of operational factors to consider when determining how premises should be designed to prevent uncontrolled interactions between horses and people. These include but are not limited to:

- i. the nature of the activity including the speed and number of horses involved.
- ii. The likelihood of a horse being uncontrolled.
- iii. The proximity and density of spectators.
- iv. The presence of marshalls and/or use of signs warning spectators of hazards.

7. Appropriate first aid and/or medical facilities must be present and available at each activity or event. Such requirements may be specified by the occupational health and safety regulations of the state in which the premises at which the activity or event is being conducted. A 'moderate' risk level first aid kit is the minimum requirement for activities and events. The kit must be as close as practical to the activity areas. All Officials and staff are to be made aware of the location of the kit.

8. An effective means of communicating with emergency services must be available at all times. This must be as close as practical to the activity areas. Staff are to be made aware of the location of the communications link.

NOTE : For activities or events that occur in remote or 'bush' locations, a satellite phone or EPIRB may be required to maintain effective communications.

#### *5.6.2.2 Additional requirements for horse hire*

1. Arena fencing must be of a height and nature that acts as a physical and visual barrier to discourage horses from attempting to jump or otherwise break-out of the arena. The fencing must be designed to minimise the chance of a rider and/or horse injuring themselves.
2. Sign(s) warning members of the public that horse activities may be dangerous should be prominently displayed.

#### **5.6.3 Staff**

##### *5.6.3.1 General*

1. Managers must ensure that staff involved with horses are able to competently carry out their duties and manage interactions between horses and people so that accidents, either to themselves, participants or other persons, are minimised.

NOTE : Staff that are indirectly involved with horses (e.g. gate attendants controlling people movements in the proximity of horses) should be provided with basic instruction in horse behaviour and safe behaviour for people in the proximity of horses.

2. Managers must ensure that staff not involved with horses are capable of carrying out their duties both effectively and safely.
3. Managers must have an induction process for new staff. The primary objective of the induction process is to ensure that staff are aware of safety, emergency and operating procedures for the activities or events being undertaken.
4. Managers are responsible for on-going staff training in operational, safety and emergency procedures.

NOTE : Emergency procedures should include as appropriate: fire control, evacuation, bush fires, storm, flooding, loose horse, falls from a horse, serious injuries, stand collapse and similar risks that may be identified.

#### 5.6.3.2 *Additional requirements for horse hire and tuition*

1. Staff (including trail-ride leaders) directly in charge of horse hire or tuition activities must:
  - a) have formal qualifications from a recognised training provider or;
  - b) have suitable experience and be in the process of obtaining formal qualifications from a recognised training provider;relative to the activity they are supervising.
2. Staff responsible for the allocation of horses must have a comprehensive knowledge of all available horses specifically in relation to their suitability for participants.

#### 5.6.4 *Horses*

##### 5.6.4.1 *General*

1. Managers must have policies and procedures for addressing (e.g. controlling or preventing) the inhumane treatment of horses.

NOTE : As a guide inhumane treatment can be to:

- Whip or beat a horse excessively
- Subject a horse to an electric shock (excluding electric fences)
- Use spurs that puncture or tear skin
- Jab the horse in the mouth with the bit excessively or persistently
- Mount or remount an exhausted, lame or injured horse
- Hypersensitise any part of a horse
- Leave a horse without adequate food, drink, or exercise
- Excessively exercise a horse

2. If it becomes apparent that the safety of individuals (e.g. participants, spectators) is compromised by the presence of a horse that shows dangerous or aberrant behaviour, staff must take all necessary action to identify, isolate and/or control the offending horse.

NOTES:

1. Appropriate action could include:
  - ♦ Securely isolating the horse from spectators and participants
  - ♦ Removing the horse from the premises
  - ♦ Imposing special conditions of use (e.g. allocate the horse to mature and capable riders, limiting participation to certain classes, providing additional staff or stewards).

2. A duty of care exists to ensure the safety of participants and spectators. Where riders bring their own horse the manager cannot simply dismiss the problem as being 'the responsibility of the horse owner'. Managers of an event could be held responsible where it was clearly apparent that a horse posed a risk.

#### 5.6.4.2 *Additional requirements for horse hire*

1. Horses known to behave dangerously must not be permitted to undertake an activity.
2. To avoid discomfort to the horse, horses provided to participants should be groomed before saddling. Particular care should be taken to remove sweat and dirt from areas under the saddle, girth and bridle.
3. Horses that must not be hired include:
  - a) horses that do not yet have their central adult incisors in wear;
  - b) mares that are more than 8 months pregnant, or lactating and in the first 3 months after foaling;
  - c) horses unfit because of advanced old age; and
  - d) horses known to be, or suspected of being, injured, lame or ill, except as advised by a veterinary practitioner.
4. Each manager is to keep records for horses hired to participants. These records must include as a minimum:
  - a) When the horse was used and who was the rider
  - b) Any incidents relating to the use of the horse
  - c) The training and competence of the horse.

#### 5.6.5 *Operations*

##### 5.6.5.1 *General*

1. Effective measures must be taken to minimise the occurrence of uncontrolled interaction between persons, horses and vehicles. Managers must have policies and procedures for permitting or restricting access to areas designated for horse activities.

Appropriate policies and procedures must include:

- a) separation of vehicles belonging to the public from horses;
- b) separation of vehicles belonging to the public from participant's vehicles and floats;
- c) safe vehicle entry and exit from any public road
- d) safe conduct of horse riding, driving or leading on access ways that are also used by vehicles; and
- e) safe conduct of horse riding, driving or leading on access ways that are also used by pedestrians.

NOTE : A combination of signs, temporary and permanent fences or barriers or marshalls may achieve this.

2. Areas designated for spectators must be clearly separated from areas designated for horses. Separation is most likely to be achieved by fencing. Where fencing is not practical, and there is a significant likelihood of uncontrolled interactions occurring, alternate means must be provided for avoiding these interactions.

NOTE : Alternatives to fencing can include temporary barriers, a physical space, marshals and/or appropriately placed signs.

3. If spectators are permitted to have access to areas designated for horse activities, clear and easy to understand information must be reasonably available advising of the potential risks associated with horses and the relevant activities. Such advice must include any restrictions applying to behaviour, prohibited areas or specific actions that may lead to injuries.

NOTE: Staff could provide advice in the form of signs, notices, or in public address announcements. "Reasonably available" means that the information is readily brought to the notice or attention of spectators.

4. Managers must be satisfied that, prior to activities commencing, participants (and when the participant is less than 18 years of age their parent or guardian) are aware of the inherently risky nature of horse activities.

NOTES:

1. This is not a requirement for a formal waiver, merely advice about the risks associated with horses and horse activities.
  2. Prominently positioned signs or appropriate declarations signed by the participant (or their parent or guardian) may be necessary to meet the requirements of this clause.
5. If staff form the opinion that a horse and its rider pose an unduly high risk to themselves, other persons or other horses, actions must be taken to prevent that horse and rider combination continuing in that activity.

6. All:—

- a) accidents (physical injuries);
- b) serious incidents (near misses) where there is no actual physical injury;
- c) incidents which may have the potential for psychological trauma (e.g. a horse bolting); and
- d) incidents involving property damage;

that are brought to the attention of staff, or that require treatment by staff, are to be recorded in an incident report.

The manager must review incident reports as soon as practicable after the incident and appropriate action must be taken to rectify the cause. On a regular basis all incidents should be reviewed for trends and appropriate corrective action taken to reduce the likelihood of similar incidents recurring. Reviews and actions taken are to be recorded. Incident reports are to be retained for a period as required by local state or territory legislation.

NOTE: Many insurance claims arise three or more years after an accident and claims relating to children may arise much later than this. An incident report can provide invaluable evidence of what actually occurred, rather than relying on memory or possible exaggerated allegations. Names and addresses of witnesses are also important and should be recorded. Insurance companies may require records to be retained for a longer period

7. The ratio of staff to participants and spectators must be at a level that:
  - a) allows adequate supervision of all participants and spectators;
  - b) minimises potential risks to spectators and other members of the public; and
  - c) allows a rapid and adequate response to emergency situations.

NOTE: The actual ratio of staff to spectators may vary greatly between individual events.

8. Managers must have a set of procedures that address the issue of a participant or member of the public failing to comply with a reasonable direction, the intention of which is to prevent possible injuries or accidents. Key staff are to be advised of such procedures and, where appropriate trained in specific responses.

9. Managers must establish and disseminate safety and emergency procedures.
10. Participants must be advised of their responsibilities in relation to:
  - a) the operating rules and procedures to be followed;
  - b) maintaining their own safety;
  - c) ensuring the safety of spectators; and
  - d) maintaining the welfare of the horses that they ride.
11. At least one nominated first aid officer must be in attendance at any activity or event. The first aid officer must have a current Senior First Aid certificate, or recognised equivalent.
12. Where activities are being conducted on public roadways, the requirements of statutory authorities (e.g. Local Government, Roads and Traffic Authorities) must be complied with prior to the activity commencing.
13. The manager must maintain and comply with current agreements with the land managers responsible for the land on which activities, including trail rides, take place.

#### *5.6.5.2 Additional requirements for events*

1. Dogs must be excluded from events or either kept on a leash or securely tied up at all times.
2. Free and unobstructed access to the event site(s) must be available for access and egress of emergency vehicles.
3. At the completion of each event a de-briefing session should be undertaken with, at least, senior staff. The objective of this briefing session is to identify problems, their resolution and areas for improvement for future events. The identified areas for improvement must be incorporated into the planning for the next event.
4. Risks associated with the event must be evaluated prior to the event commencing. Appropriate measures must be instituted to control the identified risks.

#### NOTES:

1. A member of the organising committee, an experienced staff member, or an independent specialist could be appointed as a Risk Manager. The Risk Manager could hold other roles, as long as their risk assessment is independent and unbiased.
2. The requirements in this code should be used as a basis for the risk treatment.
5. Where sub-contractors are retained for an event, the manager should ensure the sub-contractors have been appropriately contracted.

#### *5.6.5.3 Additional requirements for tuition activities*

1. Prior to commencing tuition, instructors must inspect areas of the premises where they instruct (usually an arena) to determine whether they comply with the requirements of this code. If they do not, activities should not proceed until the instructors are satisfied that the activities can be safely managed and participants have been advised of any potential hazards and/or risks.

#### *5.6.5.4 Additional requirements for horse hire activities*

1. To ensure there is a reasonable expectation that participants will not fall from a horse, or be otherwise injured:
  - a) All horses provided to participants must be allocated on the basis of suitability of the horse relative to the size and ability of the participant.

- b) The participant's levels of skill, knowledge and experience with horses must be ascertained and assessed.
2. Riders must mount their horse for the first time in a secure area that has a surface that minimises the risk of slipping and is kept free from obstructions.
3. Horses must be held by a staff member when a rider is mounting for the first time. The stirrup leathers must be checked by a staff member and, if necessary, adjusted to an appropriate length.
4. A staff member must check the stirrup iron to ensure that it is the correct size for the riders foot (wearing the correct footwear).
5. Participants must demonstrate an ability to control their horse before they can commence a trail ride.

NOTE : This may be achieved through observing each rider's control of the horse in a series of movements. The rider must demonstrate the actions of moving the horse off at a walk on cue, stopping and turning. Once the trail leader is satisfied that the rider can demonstrate these basic principles, the ride can depart from the secure area.

6. The ratio of staff to participants must be a minimum of:
  - a) 1:8 for tuition
  - b) 1:6 for trail riding.
  - c) A minimum of two staff on rides that enter remote areas or where the ride occurs overnight.

NOTES:

1. The over-riding consideration in determining ratios of staff to participants is that the number of staff present allows adequate supervision of all participants and the ability to rapidly, and adequately, respond to emergency situations. The ratios above will not be adequate in many situations. Staff and instructors should assess each situation and adjust ratios accordingly. In determining this ratio, consideration should be given to:
  - i. The experience, ability and age of the participants.
  - ii. The nature of the activities.
  - iii. The terrain or course.
  - iv. The distance to and/or accessibility of emergency services.
2. Some state Education Departments specify that a minimum of two staff members must accompany all trail rides involving school children.
7. Staff directly in charge of trail rides must:
  - a) Ensure that all participants understand how to apply the basic riding aids to make a horse stop, turn and move forward
  - b) Ensure that all participants understand the commands that will be used throughout the ride and adequately warn participants when changes of pace, direction or terrain occur
  - c) Have a contingency plan for sudden weather changes that may affect the activity
  - d) Ensure that participants have adequate protection from the environment taking into account foreseeable weather conditions.
  - e) When the ride traverses public roads, in order to avoid an accident involving riders and other users of the public road, staff must explain to riders basic safety and riding procedures to be followed when riding along the road.
8. At least one staff member accompanying a trail ride must have a current Senior First Aid certificate, or recognised equivalent.

#### 5.6.5.5 *Additional requirements for Agistment.*

1. Operators must ensure that there is a contract between the operator and the agistee that covers:
  - a) Agistee responsibilities
  - b) Veterinary care
  - c) Accounts and charges
  - d) Rules and procedures that include reporting of incidents and safety issues as soon as practicable and reasonable after they occur or become apparent.

## **6 ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS**

In order to obtain (and retain) accreditation, organisations and individuals must comply with this code.

Organisations do not have to be members of AHIC to be accredited, and accreditation is available to anyone who can demonstrate compliance with the code and pay the scheduled fees.

### **6.1 Terms and conditions**

Accreditation will be for a period of 3 years.

Audits will be undertaken as part of the accreditation process, and during the period of accreditation. Organisations are required to cooperate with this audit. Additional checks and audits may be conducted if the AHIC deems these are necessary. Accreditation audit will be a full system audit covering all relevant requirements of the Code. The audits during the accreditation period would look at all critical procedures and any previously identified opportunities for improvement. Normally these audits will take place annually however the scheduling of audits may be altered at the discretion of the AHIC. For example an accredited agistment business may not have to undertake an annual audit during the accreditation period.

Organisations are required to notify the AHIC immediately there are any changed circumstances that prevent the organisation from meeting the requirements of this Code of Practice.

At the end of the accreditation period the organisation will need to seek re-accreditation. It is the responsibility of the accredited organisation to seek re-accreditation allowing time for the audit process to be completed prior to the current accreditation lapsing.

Where the organisation continues to meet the requirements of this Code but the period of accreditation has lapsed and it has made arrangements for re-accreditation prior to the accreditation lapsing; the AHIC may continue to recognise their accreditation to the Code for a limited period to be negotiated by the AHIC and confirmed in writing.

### **6.2 Code of Ethics**

Accredited organisations must have signed the HorseSafe Code of Ethics contained in Appendix A. The Code of Ethics should be displayed prominently.

The Code of Ethics is not auditable, but serious breaches may result in investigation and disciplinary action such as loss of accreditation.

### **6.3 Complaints handling**

Accredited operators will need to provide evidence of a complaints handling procedure. Details of this procedure must be freely available on request to participants or spectators.

Information available to the public on the complaints handling procedure shall include key information such as—

1. the person to address the complaint to;
2. what time limits are imposed on responding to the complaint;
3. the obligation to provide a written response if the complaint is rejected; and
4. the name and address of the organisation to contact should the complaint not be resolved.

The system must include: recording complaints, investigating the complaint, providing remedies, recording the outcome, and analysing data to look for systemic improvements.

### **6.4 Document and Record Management**

Documented procedures and associated forms must be controlled by the organisation by either issue date and/or version number to ensure that only the current versions are in use.

Records should be legible and stored in a manner to ensure their accessibility and to prevent their deterioration. Some records may need to be secured and retained for extensive periods as indicated in subsequent clauses.

### **6.5 Accreditation Process**

There are a three different types of audits.

1. Desk audits where the initial application of an organisation is assessed prior to a site visit.
2. Desk audits where the AHIC considers a site visit is unwarranted (e.g. private coaches, lead up to an event such as a country show, an organisation that has no direct physical operations but which formulates rules for individual operations).
3. On site audit where the premises, operations, horses, staff and equipment may be physically inspected.

The accreditation process is as follows:

- Application for accreditation received
- Self assessment against the criteria
- Provide documentation to the AHIC
- Desk audit by Auditor
- Notification of result of the desk review (i.e. satisfactory, further information required, unsatisfactory)
- Advise of on-site audit details
- Audit
- Audit report presented to AHIC
- If audit report is positive - accreditation granted; if not - report on amendments required to gain accreditation.

- If amendments are required, a subsequent audit prior to accreditation being granted may be used to check that the requested amendments have been completed satisfactorily.

NOTE : Application forms and guidance are available on the AHIC web site, detailed administrative procedures are available from the AHIC.

## **6.6 Changes to the Code of Practice during the Accreditation Period**

Unless otherwise specified by the AHIC, changes to the Code of Practice during the period of accreditation will not be required to be addressed by accredited organisations until re-accreditation occurs, or until the next annual audit.

## **6.7 Re-accreditation Process**

In order to keep claiming to comply with the code, Organisations must maintain their accreditation. Briefly, the re-accreditation process is:

- The organisation is notified or advises the AHIC that reaccreditation is due
- The organisation submits the necessary documentation.
- The AHIC evaluates the documentation and reviews the applicant's history over the previous period of accreditation, including any complaints and/or audit reports
- Where the applicant meets the criteria the AHIC will notify them
- If there is any doubt the applicant may be called in for an interview or an additional audit conducted.

## **6.8 Appeals and Disputes**

Applicants for accreditation or re-accreditation who have been rejected by the AHIC may appeal that decision. The appeal will be to the CRC.

The decision of the CRC is final. However, the appellant may apply again for accreditation and be treated as a new Applicant.

## **6.9 Audit Triggers**

An audit may be initiated by the AHIC for the following reasons:

1. As part of the accreditation process and during the accreditation period
2. As a result of complaints
3. As a result of accidents.

The audit should be regarded not as a 'fault finding' measure but rather an opportunity for improving the organisation's operations.

The AHIC may undertake the audit themselves, or may delegate the audit to a suitably qualified organisation or individual.

In all cases, the audit will be under the control of an Auditor appointed by, and responsible to, the AHIC. Auditors shall not have a personal/financial involvement with the organisation applying for the audit. The audit report will be provided to both the auditee and the AHIC.

It is the responsibility of the AHIC to determine what action should be taken with the Auditee on the auditor's report. This action, which will depend on the reason for initiating the audit, could include:

- no action (accreditation continues), or re-accreditation
- a request for amendments in the organisation's operations (e.g. closer monitoring, better organisation), or
- appropriate disciplinary action against the individual or organisation audited.

In the case of amendments being required, the AHIC will submit to the organisation an appropriate request. This request should include an indication of the time frame in which the amendments must be finalised. The AHIC will do a follow up audit to check compliance with the request.

### 6.10 Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action may become necessary if a complaint about an organisation is substantiated, or an audit determines an organisation is in breach of their accreditation requirements and no attempt has been made to correct the breach.

There are three basic options for disciplinary actions:

1. Notice for correction of faults, then re-audit
2. Suspension of accreditation
3. Cancellation of accreditation.

The effected organisation will have the opportunity to appeal any decision.

### 6.11 Auditor qualifications

Confidence and reliance in an audit depends on the skills and capability of those conducting the audit.

The following attributes are required by auditors:

**Ethical conduct:** Trust, integrity, confidentiality and discretion are essential to auditing.

**Fair presentation:** Reporting truthfully, accurately, and completely.

**Professionalism:** Application of diligence, prudence and judgment.

**Independence:** Impartiality of the audit and objectivity of the audit conclusions.

**Evidence-based approach:** Reliable and reproducible audit conclusions based only on the audit evidence.

Auditors may either be an employee of AHIC, affiliated with the AHIC, or an independent contractor.

Auditors must have no direct association (financial or personal) with the organisation they are auditing.

NOTE: An organisation member may audit another member of that organisation as long as a personal or financial conflict of interest does not exist.

Knowledge and skills required by auditors are as follows:

1. An ability to communicate effectively, both in writing and verbally
2. Experience in the horse industry sufficient to satisfy the AHIC that the auditor understands the key issues and complexities associated with horse management, and horse and rider safety
3. Successful completion of the AHIC HorseSafe Auditor's course. Details of this course are available from the AHIC.

## **7 EXEMPTIONS TO THE REQUIREMENTS**

Accredited organisations can apply for exemptions to one or more of the technical requirements of this Code. The HorseSafe Committee will assess requests for exemptions. Exemptions for a particular activity or event will only apply when the activity or event is being conducted by the organisation that has been granted the exemption (or affiliates operating under the same rules and conditions).

The process for seeking an exemption is:

1. A request for the exemption, in writing, is to be submitted to the AHIC. The request must include:
  - ◆ The nature of the exemption
  - ◆ Why the exemption is required
  - ◆ A list of the risks to people or horses that may be created or increased as a result of the exemption
  - ◆ How any increased risks will be managed
  - ◆ How participants or spectators will be advised of any increased risks.
2. The request will be forwarded to the HorseSafe Committee who will assess the request. The HorseSafe Committee may confer directly with the organisation requesting the exemption and may require independent evidence, including risk assessments or an audit. The HorseSafe Committee shall provide a report to the AHIC board advising whether or not they believe the exemption should be granted and the reasons for their opinion.
3. To be successful in gaining an exemption, applicants must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the HorseSafe Committee that the proposed variation will not significantly lessen the safety provisions of this Code nor significantly increase the risk of injury to horses, participants, staff or spectators. In determining what constitutes "significantly lessening the safety provisions of the Code" or "significantly increasing the risk of injury" consideration will be given to the nature of the exemption and the ability of persons affected by the exemption, to make an informed assessment, and accept the consequences, of any increase in risk arising from the granting of the exemption.

NOTE : Even though exemptions may be granted to provisions of this Code, individual insurance companies may seek more stringent requirements and may not recognise the exemptions.

4. The HorseSafe committee report shall be submitted to the AHIC for their consideration. After considering the report the AHIC will advise the organisation, that has requested the exemption, whether or not the exemption is granted. Organisations will be provided with a copy of the HorseSafe Committee report. Generally the decision of the AHIC will be considered final, however organisations may appeal any decision made by submission to the AHIC who will convene a panel of AHIC directors to be chaired by the Chairman of the CRC to consider the appeal.

5. Details of any exemptions that are granted will be added to Annex B of this Code. The most recent version of this Code, including the updated appendix, will be maintained on the AHIC website.

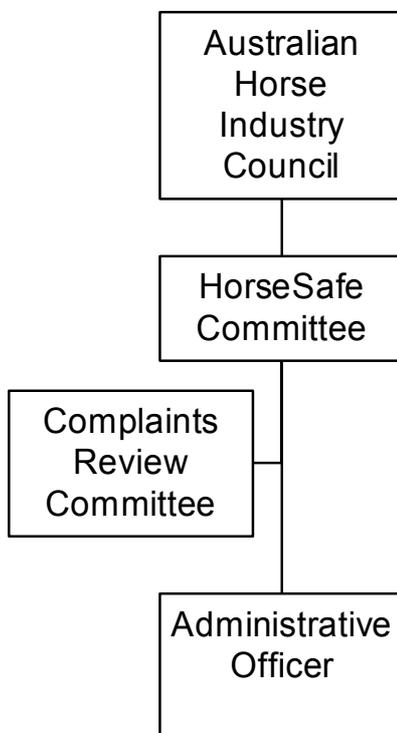
## 8 ADMINISTRATION

### 8.1 Responsibilities

The administrator of this code is the Australian Horse Industry Council.

The administrator is responsible for:

1. Administering this code
2. Accreditation of compliant organisations
3. Auditing, or appointing auditors
4. Developing admin procedures to support this code
5. Reviewing complaints against participating organisations
6. Continuous improvement of this code, with the objective of improving the management and safety of operations involving horses.
7. The AHIC Code of Practice will be managed by a committee of the AHIC to be known as the HorseSafe Committee. This committee will be responsible for the running of day to day operations and the convening of the CRC. The CRC will be comprised of two members of the HorseSafe Committee and an independent person appointed by the AHIC to act as Chairman.



### 8.2 Public notification

The AHIC will publicly advertise the names and contact details of accredited organisations and establishments.

### **8.3 Brand protection**

The AHIC will take action against individuals or organisations that claim they are accredited but who do not have a current accreditation.

The AHIC holds ownership over the HorseSafe brand and logos. Any signs, decals and accreditation certificates remain the property of the AHIC and must not be displayed and/or used if accreditation lapses.

## **9 COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURES**

### **9.1 General**

Accredited organisations must take reasonable steps to publicise the availability of the AHIC Complaints Handling Procedures to participants .

This Code provides for a two level process for the resolution of complaints against an organisation.

The first level involves direct negotiations between the complainant and the organisation, in accordance with procedures established by the organisation. Complaints related to single incidents and commercial transactions are handled at this level.

The second level involves referring the complaint to the AHIC. Referral is only used if a dispute cannot be satisfactorily resolved at the organisation's level. In addition, a direct complaint can be made to the AHIC if there is some concern that operations of a particular organisation, or individual, are in serious breach of the code.

### **9.2 Complaints to the organisation**

Organisations complying with this Code are required to have a complaints handling procedure. Participants or spectators must be encouraged to discuss their concerns with individual managers, before taking their concerns to the AHIC. Part of the AHIC complaints resolution includes a step that evaluates whether the complaint needs to be resolved by the organisation and is not the prerogative of the AHIC. The AHIC will encourage organisations to treat complaints seriously, and rapidly and equitably resolve the problem.

NOTE : The organisation's complaints handling process will be audited as part of the on-going accreditation.

### **9.3 Complaints to the AHIC**

Where complaints are not satisfactorily resolved by direct discussion with the organisation, complaints may be referred to the AHIC.

As part of the review process, any directly affected organisation will be advised of the complaint and be requested to respond.

The AHIC may decide to convene the Complaints Review Committee. Both the complainant and the organisation may be asked to attend in person, and both will be advised of the outcome. The decision of the CRC will be final.

Following a review of the complaint, the CRC could—

- dismiss the complaint as being unsubstantiated;
- determine that the complaint needs to be resolved at the organisation level;
- find the complaint proven but no penalty attached;
- issue a warning;
- undertake an audit to obtain objective evidence;
- take disciplinary action; or
- request implementation of risk management procedures.

The decision of the CRC in regard to the AHIC Code will be binding on the affected organisation.

#### **9.4 Data Collection**

An important part of the operation of the Code is the collection and analysis of data as a valuable source of information about the source and origin of complaints.

This information may include the following:

- Number of complaints lodged by and against whom
- Number and type of complaints
- Percentage found to be in breach of the Code
- Time taken to deal with complaints
- The number and type of sanctions applied.

The AHIC will maintain records of all complaints received and their findings. These records will be collected and managed in accordance with the provisions of the appropriate privacy legislation.

Periodically but at least every twelve months the CRC will review the complaints from the previous period. The CRC will analyse the data and look for trends that will help identify areas for continuous improvement. These trends may indicate:

- A high proportion of complaints against an organisation.
- A trend in complaints about a specific sector or type of activity
- Shortcomings in the Code.

The AHIC may then decide to:

- Undertake an audit of the relevant organisations
- Undertake disciplinary action
- Amend the code.

NOTE : This will most often be in the areas of the technical requirements or the code of ethics.

A report from these periodic reviews will be compiled by the CRC.

### **10 APPEALS AND DISPUTES**

Organisations whose applications for accreditation or re-accreditation have been rejected by the HorseSafe Committee may appeal that decision. The appeal will be to the CRC which, as

part of its responsibilities will review decisions made by the HorseSafe Committee accreditation panel.

The decision of the CRC is final. However, the appellant may apply again for accreditation and be treated as a new applicant.

## **11 PUBLICITY**

The AHIC will publicise the goals and objectives of this code, its main provisions, and what the public are to expect from accredited organisations. It will also publish a list of accredited organisations and their contact details.

During horse related events and at meetings, conferences or workshops, the AHIC will take opportunities to publicise the scheme, and encourage organisations to become accredited.

Information on the Code and its impact on customers (i.e. competitors, spectators and participants) shall be prominently displayed by accredited organisations.

The AHIC will issue an annual public report, which shall include as a minimum—

- identified breaches of the Code and remedial action taken;
- statistics on complaints and disputes and their resolution;
- monitoring of adherence to standards of safety, conduct and quality; and
- costs and other details of administration.

## **12 COMPLAINTS REVIEW COMMITTEE**

The Complaints Review Committee will be made up of two members of the HorseSafe Committee and an independent chairperson. The AHIC administrative function will provide an executive office to the committee as a non-voting member.

## **13 REVIEW OF THE CODE**

At an interval to be determined by the AHIC, but at no less than six months and no more than three years, the AHIC will review the code, including both the administration and the technical requirements (Clause 5).

Objectives of the review are to:

- Continually improve the code to ensure it reflects current attitudes and values
- Ensure it reflects new trends and developments in horse handling and equipment (i.e. technical requirements).
- Include new developments in risk assessment and risk management, particularly in the areas of participant and spectator safety.
- Address issues, including reported incidents, that have been identified in audits and complaints .
- Include opportunities to make the code easier to administer, and improve the interface with applicants.
- Identify opportunities to improve benefits to accredited organisations.

Inputs to this review process will include:

- Complaints received over the previous period.
- Results of audits, particularly where trends of non-compliance are showing up (e.g. it is too difficult for many operators to comply with a specific requirement).
- Submissions from accredited Organisations.
- Submissions from stakeholders in the horse industry (e.g. associations, government bodies).
- Submissions from individuals.
- Legislative changes.

The review will be advertised and submissions invited.

The review will be undertaken by a specially convened working group with members representing:

- the AHIC;
- the HorseSafe Committee;
- accredited Organisations;
- horse associations in the commercial, sporting and not-for-profit areas; and
- government (state and/or federal).

The working group may recommend an amendment to the Code. Any proposed amendment will be submitted to the full Board of the AHIC for consideration.

If approved, the AHIC will update the code and notify all accredited organisations, and relevant associations, of the changes. Accredited organisations will be expected to comply with the new provisions, although a phasing in period would apply in most situations.

## **14 DISCLAIMER**

The AHIC believe that the technical requirements and other information contained in this Code are a useful aid to assist organisations conduct horse activities safely. However this Code is not intended to be a complete guide for the safe conduct of horse activities. Nor is this Code intended to seek to replace those rules and guidelines of organisations that are designed to protect participants and spectators of horse activities. Further, no warranty is made as to the accuracy or reliability of any opinions or recommendations or other information contained in this document, or decisions pertaining to the operation of this Code of Conduct, and to the maximum extent permitted by law the AHIC disclaims all liability and responsibility for any direct or indirect loss or damage which may be suffered by any organisation or person through relying on anything contained in, omitted from or pertaining to the operation of this Code of Practice.

## **ANNEX A CODE OF ETHICS ACCREDITED ORGANISATIONS**

### **Public responsibility**

Accredited organisations shall:

- Ensure that their professional actions and their general conduct help maintain the prestige of horse related activities and contribute to the quality and responsibility of horse operations.
- Seek opportunities to be of service to their community in matters relating to the horse industry.
- Help create within the community an awareness and appreciation of the beneficial impact that horse related activities have on society.
- Provide the community with information that will assist it in formulating policies and making decisions on matters affecting horse activities.
- Within the limits of your responsibilities, ensure that areas of scenic or recreational significance, special scientific or archaeological sites, and the natural environment are respected, and that the requirements of land managers are followed.

### **Responsibility to individuals**

Accredited organisations shall:

- Provide their services conscientiously and competently.
- Not breach public trust, or the specific trust of their participants, clients, staff or competitors.
- Ensure that advice and directions provided give full and proper cognisance of personal safety.

### **Technical skills**

Accredited organisations shall:

- Continue to develop their professional knowledge and technical skills.
- Not undertake activities they are not competent to perform and, when in doubt, obtain appropriate advice and assistance that will allow these activities to be competently carried out.
- State qualifications, experience and prior responsibilities accurately.

### **Behaviour**

Accredited organisations shall:

- Maintain a high standard of integrity, and apply honesty and fair dealing in all aspects of their operations.
- Carry out their professional duties with due care and diligence.
- Conduct themselves in a manner which is neither derogatory to their colleagues nor likely to lessen the confidence of the public in horse related activities or the Code of Practice for Horse Related Activities.
- Communicate with the public in a professional and responsible manner.

**ANNEX B LIST OF EXEMPTIONS GRANTED**

Organisation	Clause Exempted	Nature of exemption	Reasons exemption granted